A

# LETTER

From the AUTHOR of the

# ARGUMENT

AGAINST A

# Standing Army,

To the AUTHOR of the

# Balancing Letter.

*A False Balance is an Abomination to the Lord, but a Just Weight is his Delight*, Prov. xi. 1.

Vendidit hic auro patriam, Dominumque potentem
Imposuit, Leges fixit pretio, atque refixit.
*Virgil. Æn. L. 6.*

*LONDON*, Printed in the Year, 1697.

# *A* LETTER *from the Author of the Argument againſt a* STANDING ARMY, *to the Author of the Balancing Letter.*

SIR,

THO the Journy-men Scriblers with all their Scurrility can't provoke me to give them an Anſwer, yet when I ſee my ſelf levell'd at in ſuch ſoft Language and Gentleman-like Behaviour, I am the more afraid; *Timeo Danaos, & dona ferentes.*

You have been pleas'd in your laſt Paragraph to own the Matter to be 'ſo nice and important, that it ought to 'be ſeverely examin'd, without falſe Colours and popular 'Rhetorick; and you are pleas'd to give your ſelf the Character of one 'zealous for Liberty, a great Adven-'turer for it, and to have a great Stake in it. If you are the Gentleman I gueſs you to be, I believe your Stake is now conſiderable; but you being a great Adventurer in getting it, it is not worth magnifying your ſelf for it: which gives me occaſion to ſay, I am not of

a desperate Fortune, and what Stake I have being provided for me by my Ancestors, I am more afraid of losing it than if it were my own Acquisition. And after this short Preface, I will proceed to examine into the matter *without false Colours or popular Rhetorick.*

I think your Letter has fix'd these three things.

1. What you would have.
2. How long you would have it.
3. For what Reasons.

*1st.* I perceive you would have us believe we have 'an Honourable Peace to the wonder of the World, and 'that nothing can hurt us but Animosities and Jealousies 'amongst our selves: And secondly, you would have 'a 'Land Force to maintain this Peace. Now, Sir, I must beg your Pardon if my Faith differs from yours; for I can't believe we have an Honourable Peace, in case we are oblig'd to keep up a Standing Force to maintain it. Peace is a Cessation of the Exercise of the use of Arms, that we may with Safety turn our Swords into Plough-shares, and Spears into Pruning-hooks; and the Prayers of the Church commanded by his Majesty for Thanksgiving for this Peace, have taken in that very Text: And if this our Peace will not answer this Character, it is not such a Peace as you would have us believe we are bless'd with. But since we have not such a Peace (for you know better than I) I will go on for Argument-sake with yours, to supply this Imperfection in it. You are pleas'd to say,

ſay, *Page* 3. when you ſeem to prepare us to conſider of the Neceſſity of a Land Force, 'You are far from the 'thought of a STANDING ARMY. Now I'll tell you, Sir, what I apprehend a STANDING ARMY to be; Horſe and Foot rais'd under Commiſſion granted by the King, with Swords and Piſtols, Pikes and Muskets, Powder and Ball to kill Men: If you by your *Land Force* mean none of all theſe; I am very impertinent in differing with you. But till you are pleas'd to diſtinguiſh your *Land Force* from this Deſcription, I believe all Men will think you mean the ſame by a LAND FORCE, as I do by a STANDING ARMY; which if you do, then you have declar'd your Thoughts againſt it, and made your ſelf guilty of the moſt apparent Contradiction that ever I ſaw wrote in ſo good a Stile.

The next thing you ſhew is, How long you would have theſe LAND FORCES continue, and that is from Year to Year: which puts me in mind of a Covenant us'd in conveying Lands in *Holland*, whereby the Seller warrants the Land to the Purchaſer for a Year and a Day, which according to their Law, is for ever; and ſo, I ſuppoſe, when you ſay from Year to Year, you mean *in ſecula ſeculorum*, as will appear by and by.

The third thing is, for what Reaſons you would have this. And, firſt, 'you abhor to give his Majeſty 'a Jealouſy of his People, as if he were not ſafe amongſt 'them without Guards: But you ſay the Caſe at preſent is, 'Whether, conſidering the Circumſtances that

'we

'we and our Neighbours are now in, it may not be 'prudent and neceſſary for us to keep up a reaſonable 'Force from Year to Year; and ſo you ſeem to lay a great ſtreſs upon the Faſhion of other Countries. You ſay, *Pag.* 4. 'The whole World, more particu-'larly our Neighbours, have now got into the miſ-'taken Notion of keeping up a mighty Force; and 'the moſt powerful of theſe happens to be our next 'Neighbour, who will very probably keep up great 'Armies, and we may appear too inviting if we are in 'an unguarded Condition.

Now, Sir, as to the Faſhion of other Countries. I remember that God having declared Laws to the *Iſraelites*, commanded them to keep them, and not to follow or hanker after the Faſhions of other Nations, either in Worſhip or Government. And if we are in the Faſhion of our Neighbours in having an Army, we muſt have their faſhioned Government too. It is the Faſhion of the F. *K.* to have a STANDING ARMY, and it is the Faſhion of his Subjects to be Slaves under that STANDING ARMY. I obſerve Men that are addicted to Faſhions, follow them in every thing. Now to be Freemen under a STANDING ARMY is not the Faſhion of our Neighbours. And I am afraid we ſhall never think our ſelves compleatly in the Faſhion till we have got Wooden Shoes too.

But I ſee, Sir, you are not ſo much a Fop as to be in the Faſhion for faſhion ſake, but that you think there is a neceſſity for it; for you are afraid of being invaded by

by our Neighbours, 'the next and greateſt of whom 'will probably keep up great Armies. And here by the way before I forget it, I would put you in mind of your Tenure from Year to Year; for I think by this Argument you would have our Land Force to continue as long as the *French* King is in a miſtaken notion of keeping up great Armies, ſo that from Year to Year is already become a Phraſe for ever. For my part I ſhould be unwilling to ſtay for any thing I wiſh for till the *French* King disbands his Army. Therefore, Sir, don't draw Men into your Propoſals by ſowing Pillows under them, by ſoft Language, of a *Land Force*, not Standing Army; *from Year to Year, under the Conſideration of Parliament*. Let us have plain words, and then your Propoſals, according to your own Reaſons, muſt be for a Standing Army in *England*, as long as the *French* King, or any of his Succeſſors, keep up a Standing Army in *France*: you had as good open your Matter fairly at firſt, for every thing elſe is but flouriſh till you come to the Point.

Now, Sir, I confeſs I give as little credit to the Words and Leagues of Princes as you do, and depend more upon their Intereſt than Integrity for the performance of them, and therefore am not for leading them into Temptations to attack us, and would always have a Defence ſutable to our Danger. Nature hath armed all Creatures with Weapons to oppoſe thoſe that aſſault them, and the Policy of Man hath found out ſeveral Artificial ones for himſelf. Now the ſole Debate between us is, In whoſe Hands theſe Weapons ſhould be put.

Of

Of this matter I have diſcourſed from the 18th to the 26th Page of my *Argument*, which you neither can or do pretend to anſwer, and therefore I refer you thither again: Indeed in your 9th, 10th and 11th Pages you tell us, 'That Regular and Diſciplin'd Troops 'are far ſuperiour to the beſt and ſtrongeſt Militia in 'the World, admitting this Condition, that there are no 'Regular or Diſciplin'd Troops in that Militia. But I will make bold to tell you, that a Militia may be as well Diſciplin'd as any Army; nay our own Army, if they were Disbanded, will moſt of them be ſent to the Militia; and I ſuppoſe calling them by a new Name will not make them worſe Soldiers. Now as to your Inſtances in Hiſtory, I ſhall only make this ſmall Objection to them all, That you are miſtaken in every particular. For the *Perſian* Army was made up of Standing Troops, kept up in the ſeveral Provinces of the Empire, and not of Militia, as you falſly inſinuate: and with theſe Armies they conquered eaſily the ſeveral Principalities which made up their vaſt Empire, and were defended by Standing Armies; but when they came to fight with the *Greek* Militia, all their mighty Armies came to nothing. Of this we have the Inſtances of *Xenophon*, who with ten Thouſand *Greeks* marched three Thouſand Miles through their Country in ſpight of a numerous Army obſerving him. Afterwards of *Ageſilaus*, who with a ſmall *Spartan* Militia had put an end to the *Perſian* Empire, if the Factions of *Greece* had not call'd him home. The mighty Army of *Xerxes* was deſtroyed by a *Greek* Militia. Nay the better part of *Alexander*'s Army was made

made up of a Militia taken out of the ſeveral Cities of *Greece*.

The Inſtance you give of the *Romans*, makes as much againſt you; for they found more difficulty in conquering a few little Commonwealths about them, who fought by Militias, than *Aſia*, *Egypt*, and all the Arbitrary Governments they conquered, which fought againſt them with ſtanding Armies. Who will deny that *Ceſar*'s Conqueſts over the *Gallick* Militia, were greater than *Pompey*'s over the *Aſiatick* ſtanding Armies? And whereas you ſay, *Page* 11th, 'That nothing ſtood 'before the *Roman* Armies whilſt they were kept under 'Diſcipline; but when all their Order was broke, and 'they became a Militia, the Northern Nations in *Eu-* 'rope, as well as the *Sarazens* in the Eaſt, overrun the 'Roman Empire; I muſt take leave to ſay, the juſt contrary to this is true: for whilſt they fought by a Militia, they conquer'd the whole World; but afterwards in the time of the Emperours, when they kept up Standing Armies of three hundred and ſixty thouſand Men, as *Tacitus* reckons them, they were overrun by every Barbarous Nation that invaded them.

Your Inſtance of *Hannibal* is nothing to the purpoſe, for the *Carthaginians* did not beat the *Romans*, but *Hannibal* the *Roman* Generals: He got no Victory but by his own ſingle Conduct; and when the *Romans* fought againſt any other General, they were ſeldom unſucceſsful.

The *Turks* alſo met with much more trouble in ſubduing the *Hungarian* and *Epirot* Militias, than all their Empire beſides. *Scanderbeg* with a ſmall Militia came off conſtantly ſucceſsful in two and twenty Battles againſt their numerous Standing Armies. *Huniades* and his Son *Mathias*, fought always with Militias againſt the *Turkiſh* Standing Armies, and performed ſuch Actions as Poſterity can hardly believe, and I am ſure were never equall'd by any other Force.

And whereas you ſay, 'the Preſervation of *England* 'in Queen *Elizabeth*'s time was by accident, and we 'muſt not always expect to live upon Miracles: I don't find but that Excellent Princeſs, and her Court, were of another Opinion. We don't find her, or her Creatures, after the *Spaniards* were defeated, to uſe this Cant to the Parliament. "Gentlemen, you ſee what "a Danger you have lately eſcaped, we were preſer- "ved by Providence and Chance, but I hope you "will not always expect Miracles: It is neceſſary to "keep up a Standing Force, for I can't depend upon "the Defence of my People. She ſcorn'd ſuch Traſh, and would have cag'd any evil Counſellor who durſt give her ſuch Advice: She thought her ſelf ſafe in the Affection of her People, though this Gentleman, at above a hundred Years diſtance, tells her the contrary.

But you ſeem very apprehenſive of being *ſurprized without notice*; and mention, *Page* 5th, the late Attempts from *la Hogue* and *Calais*; and that 'if in a 'time

'time of War and Jealouſie we were ſo near being fa-
'tally overrun, without warning or intelligence, it is
'much more poſſible to ſee ſuch Deſigns laid in times
'of Sloth and Quiet, when we are under no Fears,
'and may have no notice of it. Sir, I have no bet-
ter Opinion of our Intelligence during the War, than
you have. However the buſineſs of *la Hogue* was
the Talk of the *Exchange*, and in all the publick
Prints, beſides the Gazette, two Months before it
happened: And as to that of *Calais*, His Majeſty,
by his extraordinary Care, ſurprized the Enemy with
ſeventy Sail on their Coaſts, which they never ex-
pected. And that our Notice ſhould be more difficult
in Peace than War, I cannot underſtand, ſince in the
latter all Ports are ſhut, and Merchants ſtopt; and
in the former the Ports are open, Travellers abroad,
Merchants at Sea, and an Embaſſador at their
Court.

*Page* the 8*th*, you give a great Character of Arbi-
trary Government, where Men 'are ruined that fail
'in performing what is expected from them, in
'keeping the Secrets that are enjoined them, by which
'the Prince can execute things in other manner than
'can be conceived by thoſe that live in free Govern-
'ments. I am ſure if Impunity of thoſe who fail in
performing their Duty, and in keeping our Secrets,
be the Character of a free Government, we are free
with a witneſs. But I can't ſee why the puniſhing
of them ſhould be inconſiſtent with a free Govern-
ment.

And after all, you ſeem to apprehend as ill Conſequences from a STANDING ARMY as I do, as *Page* the 14*th*, where ſpeaking of the Dangers of it, you ſay, 'This is a large Field, and Hiſtory is 'ſo full of Inſtances of this kind, that it will be eaſy 'to open copiouſly on the Subject. From the Prætorian 'Cohorts down to our Modern Armies, enough can 'be gathered to give a very frightful Repreſentation 'of a STANDING ARMY. And afterwards, *Page* the 15*th*, 'I do not deny but ſeveral Inconve-'niences may be apprehended from a STANDING 'FORCE, and therefore I ſhould not go about to 'perſwade you to it, if the thing did not ſeem indiſpen-'ſibly neceſſary. Now I ſuppoſe by indiſpenſible Ne-ceſſity you mean, you are ſure without this Army that our Neighbours will invade us, and that it is impoſſible our Fleets or Militia, however managed, can be able to defend us: whether there is ſuch a neceſſity or not, I refer you to my Argument; and if there is not, you have given up the Queſtion: For you, in effect, admit a certain Slavery on one ſide, and if there is but contingent Ruin on the other, it is eaſy to determine of which ſide the Balance lies. But you ſay that the Parliament ſhall overlook it; but will you be Security the Army ſhall not overlook the Parliament? O but that can't be if they are kept up from Year to Year! '*Cæſar* with all his Ge-'nius could not work his Army to it in leſs than ten 'Years.

Sir,

Sir, If that be the exact time of corrupting an Army, pray conſider that ours hath been kept up nine Years already. But I am as far from any Jealouſie of His preſent Majeſty as you are, and yet I am not afraid to ſay, that Army which can do no hurt, can do no good.

It is impoſſible to conſider of a STANDING FORCE which ſhall be ſufficient to oppoſe a Foreign Power, without conſidering it at the ſame time ſufficient to ſuppreſs the Subject at home: for they muſt beat thoſe who you ſuppoſe can beat us; and I muſt confeſs I am unwilling to depend on their good Will.

Sir, Page 15. you ſeem to think me a Jealous, Melancholy and Timorous Man, overrun with the Spleen; but I fancy my ſelf as free from all this without a Place, as perhaps you are with one. Come don't fear *your Stake*, I dare give you Land Security that you will come off a Winner.

And as for the Gallant Gentlemen of the Army, whom you fear will be Loſers, I ſhall be as ready as you to recompenſe them for their Bravery. But to ſuppoſe our Fleets to be ſurprized and betrayed, our Militia to be recreant, and all our Intelligence, Fidelity and Courage to be lodged in a Standing Army, I muſt confeſs is out of my power.

In

In Page the 8th you ſay, 'You can't ſee ſome Men 'grow all on a ſuddain ſuch wonderful Patriots, ſo 'jealous of the Prerogative, ſuch Zealots for publick 'Liberty, without remembring what their Behaviour 'was in the late Reigns. Now I muſt own to you, I am better pleaſed to ſee this, than to ſee ſome Men who were ſuch wonderful Patriots, &c. in the laſt Reigns, act the ſame part now as much as in them lies, as the others are ſaid to have done formerly.'

Before I have done I muſt take notice of one Paſſage in your 10th Page. You ſay, 'Whenever the fa-'tal time comes that this Nation grows weary of 'Liberty, and has neither the Virtue, the Wiſdom, 'nor the Force to preſerve its Conſtitution, it will 'deliver up all, let all the Laws poſſible, and all the 'Bars imaginable be put in the way to it. It is no 'more poſſible to make a Government immortal, than 'to make a Man immortal. When I join this to the ſenſible Impreſſions you ſeem to have of the Danger of a Standing Army in the next Line, and yet an indiſpenſible Neceſſity of keeping one, methinks you give broad Hints that you think our time is come. But I doubt not there is Virtue enough yet in *England* to preſerve our Conſtitution, though a wiſer Head than yours deſigned its Ruine.

I will conclude in telling you we have a happy Government, where the King hath all the Power neceſſary to execute the Laws. All Title ariſes upon an

an equal diſtribution of Power; and he that gets an over-balance of Power (for you and I are balancing) takes away the Title from the reſt, and leaves them a Poſſeſſion without a Right, which is a Tenure at the Will of the Lord.

Now Sir, if a Parliament ſhould ſubject all the Lands of *England* to this Tenure, I make no doubt your *Stake* and mine would be as ſafe during His Majeſty's Reign, as in our own Poſſeſſion; and yet if you will promiſe me to bring in a Bill to that purpoſe, I am contented that all I have ſaid about a ſtanding Army ſhall go for nothing.

Sir, In hopes you will keep up your Correſpondence, I conclude my ſelf

*Your moſt humble Servant.*

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*FINIS.*